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Their style, instead of being distinguished by swift easy flow, dramatic directness, and brief pregnant expression, is diffuse, heavily charged with details, and of an almost puerile simplicity. Though the author's aim in such poems may have been to present truth and fact, their effect cannot honestly be called realistic, or even true. Realism, in the choice of details, there certainly is in all these poems, as when we learn that the Thorn is

"Not five yards from the mountain path,
And to the left three yards beyond
You see a little muddy pond
Of water."

Or again when it is related (first edition) that Goody Blake dwelt in Dorsetshire

"And in that country coals are dear,
For they come far by wind and tide."

Trifling, or unnecessary details, are thus used by Wordsworth for the same reason as they appear in the work of systematic realists; namely, to give veracity and life-likeness; but their presence is due also, and more, to a lack of humor, and even to a lack of taste. They disappear from his work whenever he is swayed by powerful feeling. His eye, then, is still sufficiently observant, and his mind discriminates, as it never does otherwise, between triviality and vigorous poetical truth. The evidence furnished, not only by the poems but by the notes, of his belief in the value of even the slightest information concerning his work, is at times critically ludicrous; yet it has worth, too, as indicating once more the self-analytical character of Wordsworth's mind.

Again, in looseness of structure, disregard for plot and story-interest, and in lack of formal, occasionally even logical, coherence, Wordsworth once more seems to show traits of realism. But it must not be forgotten that he was never theoretically a realist in the modern sense. As to these particular points, they are not the result of the realist's desire to reproduce the confusion of crude actuality. They are due more to carelessness, and to a thoughtless widely-comprehensive rather than a polishing habit of mind. Some of the notes testify to the attempt to reach unity, and most of the short poems have in general both unity and coherence.

Nothing is more evident, indeed, than that it is most easy to exaggerate the realistic tenden-

cies and effects in Wordsworth's work, especially if the critic undertakes to regard these as consciously and intentionally realistic. Many are due, undoubtedly, to his express belief in the value of the actual concrete fact; others arise from personal peculiarities. To pronounce absolute judgment on individual cases thus becomes difficult if not impossible; and it has been the chief object of this paper to show that while in sub-structure and in method Wordsworth's work may be regarded as truly realistic and analytical, what he builds on this realistic foundation is as clearly personal and idealistic. Aside from his method, we estimate his realism rather by his defects than by his excellences.

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THE 'EVIL SPIRIT' IN GOETHE'S FAUST I.

THE opinion has been ably defended in these columns that the 'Böse Geist' in the cathedral scene represents the voice of Gretchen's conscience, and in support of this view Prof. Wilson quotes Gretchen's exclamation: *Ach wär ich der Gedanken los*, etc. It is always best, and really the only safe way, to rely on the poet's own language. Hence we need go no farther, and accept the passage as conclusive. What the *Böse Geist* says is Gretchen's own thought.

The question may, however, be raised: was it the poet's intention to represent only her conscience? It would seem that the *Böse Geist* is an impersonation in the same sense that the *Erdgeist* is. We must, therefore, attribute to him a certain character. As the equivalent of Gretchen's conscience the conception would be merely allegorical. But Goethe shuns allegories as frigid,—with him everything becomes concrete, plastic, tangible. He is anything but a mystic,—his artistic sense, and also his scientific way of thinking, preserved him from this tendency. Of sentimental vamping there is no trace in him, even the powerfully emotional features in his works start from, and rest on, a realistic basis. Hence no poet may be taken more completely *au pied de la lettre*, provided only it is done with due respect for the poetic form and intention.

I believe it is the more general view that the

Evil Spirit personifies Gretchen's conscience, and it is, in a sense, a correct view. But Gretchen's thoughts are not merely dictated by the sense of her own failings—this would be conscience; they reflect also the religious views that her education had inculcated in her. The dark side of these views is embodied in the Evil Spirit, and the latter is so far a poetic production in the same sense, though not in the same degree, as Mephistopheles. He is the 'tormentor' believed in by the church, therefore a reality for Gretchen. It may be argued that the unhappy girl does not recognise him as such, and that her exclamation *Ach wär ich der Gedanken los* disposes of the theory of an outside agency personified in the form of the Evil Spirit. It seems to me, however, that, inasmuch as the Spirit only expresses the thoughts of Gretchen, and does so as a distinct person, it must have been the purpose of the poet to represent him, if not as the original cause of these thoughts, at least as the present instigator or suggester of the same. It is through him that these thoughts assume such a religious coloring as we find in these significant lines:

Grimm fasst dich!
Die Posaune tönt!
Die Gräber beben!
Und dein Herz,
Aus Aschenruh
Zu Flammenqualen
Wieder aufgeschaffen,
Bebt auf!

The voice of conscience conjures up the wrong the person has done, presents it in its most terrible aspects, and leads to remorse. It is clearly expressed in the opening lines 3776-3793. But here we see something that is quite different, quite distinct from the reproaches of conscience, a threat of terrible meaning which has nothing to do with remorse.

If Goethe intended the Evil Spirit in this scene *only* as the voice of conscience, it would seem he committed an artistic mistake. The voice of conscience is loudest in privacy. How much more impressive would the self-accusations of Gretchen have sounded in her humble room, in the privacy of her bed-chamber? But the poet takes us to the Cathedral. The organ peals forth its majestic tones, the solemn and terrible *Dies iræ* resounds through the echo-

ing vault, the altar, with its priest and acolytes, is before her, neighbors right and left, a multitude of things and persons that perplex and bewilder, while they fill the humble soul with awe and perhaps with terror.

This is the situation. It is not one favorable to hear the 'still small voice,' but one eminently proper to call up before the mind the visions of heaven and hell, of the glory and of the torment in the world to come.

The thoughts that now overcome Gretchen are exactly such as the surroundings could not help suggesting to a simple mind like hers. Without understanding the language, she feels the effect of that terrible:

Dies iræ, dies illa
Solvat sæculum in favilla.

Now the organ strikes in and the Evil Spirit tells her of the fiery torments which await her on the day of judgment. The organ takes away her breath (l. 3810), the chant melts her heart in its lowest depths, and now rings forth:

Judex ergo cum sedebit,
Quidquid latet adparebit,
Nil inultum remanebit.

Gretchen's anguish increases, but the Tormentor does not cease his cruel work, and the chant breaks in:

Quid sum miser tunc dicturus?
Quem patronum rogaturus?
Cum vix justus sit securus.

Once more the evil spirit raises his voice:

Ihr Antlitz wenden
Verklärte von dir ab,
Die Hände dir zu reichen
Schauert's den Reinen,
Weh!

And the chorus for the last time:

Quid sum miser tunc dicturus?

Is it possible to believe that the poet introduced all these effects for no other purpose than to impersonate Gretchen's conscience?

The scene would be impressive without the Evil Spirit; it becomes dramatic by his presence.

In Gretchen's belief the Evil spirit is a reality, though we are not, perhaps, expected to think that she knows he is near her. Her belief is the typical one of the middle ages. In that belief a human transgression is a *sin*, and a sin has a theological significance: it was inspired, and will finally be punished, by the 'Temptor,' who will then be the 'Tormentor.'

Be'tst du für deiner Mutter Seele, die
Durch dich zur langen, langen Pein hinüberschlief?
Auf deiner Schwelle wessen Blut? etc.

Gretchen is praying for her mother, but her mother had died without a final confession, consequently in sin. What a fearful idea for the poor girl, suggested and fostered by the Church, and quite distinct from the bitterness of remorse. There is only one way to escape the dire consequences of sin: the absolution of sins granted by the Church. If this absolution has not been obtained, the guilty one becomes forever the victim of the 'Evil one,' subject to never-ending torture of the most appalling kind. If we put ourselves into the mental attitude of Gretchen, what do we see? The prospect of an everlasting punishment in the torments of hell for her mother. For this is the great sin of Gretchen: to have caused her mother to die without the absolution of the church. By her belief she cannot doubt what the evil spirit tells her. Her mother "slept into" (*hinüberschlief*) the long, eternal torment. The other sin is her brother's death caused by her culpable love for Faust. He too died without absolution. These thoughts weigh upon her, and in so far are in her conscience, but they come originally to her from without, from the associations and teachings of the church, from the awful chant which she hears, and which awakens in her mind the lessons taught her when she, an innocent girl, prattled her prayers, *Gebete lallte*, and only carelessly listened to the awful doctrine.

Und ihr Verbrechen war ein guter Wahn says Faust, and so say we who no longer share the beliefs of the medieval church. But Gretchen, as the consequences of her delusion come home to her with awful distinctness, cannot say so. The more she feels the significance of what she has done, the more intensely appear before her inner eye the terrible menaces of the church. All this the poet impersonates in the 'Evil Spirit,' exactly as he impersonated in Mephistopheles all that is negative, sceptical, indifferent, and flippant in human nature. Our pity for Gretchen grows infinite when we ponder over the incredible misery which must invade her soul, precisely because she is an unsophisticated, artless, and utterly unsceptical believer in the infallibility of the doctrines of the church.

In her belief it is the Devil that threatens and torments her in that scene so heart-rending in its bottomless pathos.

There is a curious parallelism between the "Evil Spirit" of this scene and the "furies" of the Greeks. These furies also may be said to represent the conscience of the tormented person, but they are nevertheless poetic creations, and they are a representation not only of the conscience, but of the entirety of the *belief* of their victim. Therein lies the great difference between a mere abstraction and a concrete form for that abstraction, the visible realization of a conception. Schiller felt this when he advised Goethe to make the furies appear bodily on the stage, in the third act of his *Iphigenie auf Tauris*. I have shown in the Introduction to my edition of this drama that Goethe could not do so, because the entire conception of this work rested upon the poet's absolute disregard for the Greek idea of redemption and expiation, though, at the same time, he makes the most skilful use of the ancient beliefs as *motifs* for his characters. But in the case of Faust the immensity of his fault, which consists in his frivolous treatment of Gretchen, largely appears in the latter's child-like faith in the teachings of her religion. This faith makes her resist the proffered help in the last act. She dies because she feels that there can be no forgiveness for her in any other way, and we are made to feel that she is saved, in the sense of her own belief, because she had the strength to resist this last temptation. But even this resistance is due to an outward cause, the fear of the 'evil one,' as lines 4455-4459 show. Goethe evidently felt that he needed to give an outward form to the imaginary 'fiend' or 'tormentor,' at least in one scene. He chose that most impressive one in the Cathedral. Here, where all the surroundings call up early associations, the tremendous weight of the doctrine of a personal devil who will torment the evil-doer forever and ever falls upon her and crushes her. We may not *see* the evil one, and, probably, a visible impersonation would not add anything to the unparalleled impressiveness of the scene, but, at all events, we *hear* what is whispered into Gretchen's ear: hence there is a distinct outside action which must proceed from a person, and this person is the creation of

religious faith, the 'fiend,' the 'evil one' in whose existence Gretchen believes as firmly as she does in the existence of God.

The scene in the Cathedral stands in the closest relation to the scene in the dungeon. Gretchen, the beloved of Faust, whom she still loves with every fibre of her heart, resists resolutely the offer of freedom and of whatever happiness a life with the beloved man might yet have in store for her. It is true she is crazed, and her instinctive horror of Mephistopheles drives her into a frenzy, but all this is the result of the despairing thoughts that possess her mind. She has learned—her confessor must have told her so—that she cannot gain any hope of forgiveness in the world to come, unless she offers her own life in expiation. Who does not feel the misery of this stricken soul as she writhes in her anguish! But she must resist—she must give up freedom, life, every trace of earthly happiness! We feel that she must, precisely because her faith is implicit, artless, absolute. I believe it is only necessary to consider this, in order to recognize the poetic appropriateness of the *Böse Geist* in the Cathedral scene. It does not follow, and I feel compelled to state this here to escape misinterpretation, that Gretchen is not moved and tormented also in other ways. The poem tells this plainly and powerfully.

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FRENCH LITERATURE.

- A. *Six Jolis Contes*, avec préface et notes par ALPHONSE N. VAN DAELL. Boston: Publié par *L'Echo de la Semaine*. 8vo, pp. 56.
- B. *French Reading for Beginners*, with notes and vocabulary by OSCAR KUHN. New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1899. 12mo, pp. 310.
- C. *Contes fantastiques* by ERCKMANN-CHATRIAN, edited with brief notes and vocabulary by EDWARD S. JOYNES. New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1899. 8vo, pp. xii+172.
- D. *Episodes from "Sans Famille"* by HECTOR MALOT, edited with notes and vocabulary by I. H. B. SPIERS. Boston: D. C. Heath and Co., 1899. 12mo, pp. 167.
- E. *Molière's "Les Précieuses Ridicules,"* edited with introduction and notes by WALTER DALLAM TOY. Boston: D. C. Heath and Co., 1899. 12mo, pp. xv+62.
- F. "*Scènes de la Révolution française*" from the "*Histoire des Girondins*" by ALPHONSE DE LAMARTINE, selected and edited with notes by O. B. SUPER. Boston: D. C. Heath and Co., 1900. 12mo, pp. vi+157.

A. It is with a distinct sense of bereavement, with a deep feeling of sorrow, that this collection of stories is reviewed. In his preface, the editor states that he purposes to "continue the publication of volumes of the same size." With what pleasure, with what confidence would texts prepared by this able teacher and editor have been welcomed!

The following paragraph is from the preface:

"No grammatical explanations seemed needed which a competent teacher could not readily give, and therefore it would have been a waste of space to offer them in the notes."

This view of the uselessness of grammatical annotation would be correct, if such annotation were an end in itself and not a means to the better appreciation of the text. Grammatical explanations are given, not with the idea of teaching a rule for the sake of teaching a rule, but with the object of explaining the construction of a phrase or sentence, so that the meaning of that and future similar phrases and sentences may be more accurately grasped. In other words, a student knows his grammar, not when he can repeat all the rules by heart, but when he can apply them with precision. For the pupil to wait until the teacher gives the needed grammatical explanation, means that he must prepare his lessons privately without an accurate knowledge of the various constructions he meets. And, further, every teacher knows how likely is a student to remember a grammatical explanation given orally by the instructor to the whole class. This discussion, however, need not proceed further now. The question, of course, remains of how full this grammatical annotation should be. It would seem that it all depends on the class of students